



Ms. Irene Chan Heung-lan

Occupational Therapist
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Ms. Chan has been practicing occupational therapy for elderly clients in various settings, since she graduated from Professional Diploma in Occupational therapy of the Hong Kong Polytechnic University since 1990. She pursued her Master Degree in PolyU in late 90s and her study was specialized in the assessment of patients with dementia. Her research, "A Study of the reliability and validity of the Chinese version of the Dementia Rating Scale", won the Postgraduate Research Award by Hong Kong Psychogeriatric Association in 2000, and, was published in the "International Psychogeriatrics", a journal with high impact factor in the field. To meet the holistic needs of the elderly clients, she broaden her clinical skills through attending various training in different fields, including Traditional Chinese Medicine, health qigong, counseling, promotion of quality of life, Neuro-Developmental treatment for Adult Hemiplegia, and, Neuro-IFRAH training for patients with neurological conditions. To further widen her horizon in clinical practices, she had arranged attachment to the community psychiatric services in Springfield Hospital of England, and also had attended the World Alzheimer congress while she was attached to the neuropsychiatric services and OT services in John Hopkins Hospital of USA.

She has been active in participating in various professional development activities. Being a member of the Psychogeriatric Rehabilitation Working Group under the Hospital Authority Occupational Therapy Coordinating Committee, she contributed much in complying a guideline on "Elderly Depression" in 2002. Being the convenor of another workgroup, she complied the "Guideline on Protective Measures of Hemiplegic Shoulder" in collaboration with New South Wales. The guideline was published at HA eKg websites and the related presentation won the best oral presentation award in 2012 HA convention. She also had been a member of a HA multidisciplinary working group led by geriatrician to develop the Care Protocol in Fall Prevention.

She has also been active in writings for cross-professional and carer's education. She contribute writings to <<活出晚晴職業治療師文集>>(2000), Handbook of Measures for the Chinese Elderly (2008, ISBN 978-962-86424-6-5).

Occupational Therapy for the Elderly

Occupational Therapy (OT) is the art of applying therapeutic activities in the treatment of patients with different disease and disability. Our mission statement is "To help our clients to lead a meaningful life of their own choice". With the advance of evidence-based practice, OT intervention is progressing and transforming from traditional remedial activities to more scientific, sophisticated, systematic and specialized protocol driven training. In current practice, occupational therapists are not only working in hospital setting but also in primary care setting e.g. in nursing home and general out-patient clinic.

In a normal aging path, an elderly progress from active state to mild disabled and finally frail until dying in peace. An elderly can stay active in any state of disability. Occupational Therapists, as a health care profession concerned about everyday life role activities and tasks, contribute in different sectors on the aging path from hospitals to community. When an elderly is in normal aging or preclinical (mild symptoms) state, OT services focused on primary health care by early detection and intervention for high risk elderly to defer hospital admission. When there are major disease symptoms arising from elderly and need hospitalization, OT will contribute in restoring their functions by program-based training in hospital. Upon their transition back to community, OT will help maintaining their functioning in community living by community-based program.

The common problems of elderly are frailty, decline in self-care functioning, visual/hearing or cognitive impairment, osteoporosis, fall and chronic disease. To echo their needs, occupational therapists provide tailor-made individualized OT intervention. This includes assessment and training on physical endurance, ADL (Activities of Daily Living), Instrumental ADL, cognition, fall prevention and home safety. Other specialized services provided by OT are fabrication of pressure garment, splints and seating devices to relief symptoms, enhance proper positioning and prevent complication. In addition, design and prescription of assistive devices will facilitate independent living of elderly or to help relieving caring stress of their caregivers.

To better illustrate OT services in relation to active aging, OT intervention will be presented using cases of special disease group. In which, you will find that we are a group of specialized professional workforce that are responsible to our elderly clients and are ready to take up challenges in the everyday moving health care system of HK.